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A CUBA PULL-OUT IN AGOLA?

ANNCR: NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN EXAMINES SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS INDICATING A CERTAIN AMBIVALENCE IN HAVANA'S FOREIGN POLICY-PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO ANGOLA AND LATIN AMERICA.

VOICE: LAST WEEK, WHEN SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER WAS IN EUROPE, SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER OLOF PALME READ TO HIM EXCERPTS OF A LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM FIDEL CASTRO. ITS BURDEN WAS THAT CUBAN TROOPS WOULD SOON BEGIN PULLING OUT OF ANGOLA.

AT ALMOST THE SAME TIME, THE NUMBER THREE MAN IN THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT, VICE PREMIER CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, SPOKE TO REPORTERS IN TOKYO AND MEXICO CITY ON THE SAME SUBJECT--THE PULL-OUT OF CUBAN TROOPS. IN TOKYO, WHERE HE HAD GONE TO NEGOTIATE A DEAL FOR CUBAN SUGAR, HE SAID THAT HAVANA'S TROOPS WOULD NOT LEAVE ANGOLA UNTIL THE LUANDA GOVERNMENT ASKS THEM TO DO SO, BUT DID NOT COMMENT DIRECTLY ON THE CASTRO LETTER. SOME DAYS LATER, WHEN MEXICAN REPORTERS ASKED HIM ABOUT THE CASTRO LETTER TO PALME, HE REPEATED THAT STATEMENT. AND HE REITERATED THAT THE CUBAN TROOPS WENT TO ANGOLA AT THE REQUEST OF A LEGITIMATE, BELEAGUERED GOVERNMENT. MOREOVER, RODRIGUEZ SAID, HAVANA MIGHT SEND TROOPS TO OTHER PARTS OF LATIN AMERICA IF A SITUATION SIMILAR TO ANGOLA'S SHOULD ARISE THERE. IN REPORTING ON THE RODRIGUEZ PRESS CONFERENCE IN MEXICO CITY, HAVANA DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTS MADE NO MENTION OF THE CASTRO LETTER.

OF COURSE, THE RODRIGUEZ THESIS THAT CUBAN TROOPS WERE IN ANGOLA AT THE REQUEST OF A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SQUARE WITH THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THEIR ARRIVAL THERE. THE CUBAN TROOPS, AS SUBSEQUENTLY ADMITTED BY HAVANA, WENT THERE TO HELP THE POPULAR MOVEMENT-- ONE FACTION FIGHTING AGAINST TWO OTHERS FOR POLITICAL POWER IN ANGOLA.

THE CUBAN TROOPS MANNED MASSIVE QUANTITIES OF SOVIET MILITARY HARDWARE SHIPPED TO THE POPULAR MOVEMENT. IT WAS THANKS TO THAT COMBINATION-- SOVIET WEAPONS AND CUBAN MAN-POWER THAT ENABLED THE POPULAR MOVEMENT TO PREVAIL OVER THE TWO OTHER FACTIONS REPRESENTING TWO-THIRDS OF THE COUNTRY.

IN ANY CASE, BOTH THE CASTRO PLEDGE TO REMOVE HAVANA'S TROOPS FROM ANGOLA AND THE RODRIGUEZ STATEMENT THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN ONLY IF LUANDA REQUESTED IT ARE SEEN AS AN ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY WHAT CLEARLY IS A CASE OF BLATANT INTERVENTION BY HAVANA IN ANGOLA'S AFFAIRS.

IT IS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT A COMMENT BY STOCKHOLM'S SVENSKA DAGBLADET -- ON THE CASTRO LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER PALME MUST BE SEEN. THE SWEDISH NEWSPAPER CALLED THE CASTRO LETTER AN " ALMOST HOPELESS ENTERPRISE" TO DEFEND CUBAN ACTIONS IN ANGOLA.

AND THAT IS WHY, TOO, WASHINGTON HAS TAKEN THE CASTRO LETTER WITH A LARGE PINCH OF SALT. ITS SKEPTICISM AS TO CUBAN ASSERTIONS THAT HAVANA'S TROOPS WILL SOON BEGIN A WITHDRAWAL FROM ANGOLA IS BOLSTERED BY THE ASSERTION BY FIDEL CASTRO IN HIS LETTER THAT CUBA DOES NOT CONTEMPLATE A REPETITION OF ITS ANGOLA ACTION ELSEWHERE-- PRESUABLY INCLUDING LATIN AMERICA. THE CASTRO STATEMENT IN NO WAY SQUARES WITH THE RODRIGUEZ COMMENTS IN MEXICO CITY AND TOKYO INDICATING OTHERWISE, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO CUBA'S WESTERN HEMISPHERE NEIGHBORS.

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